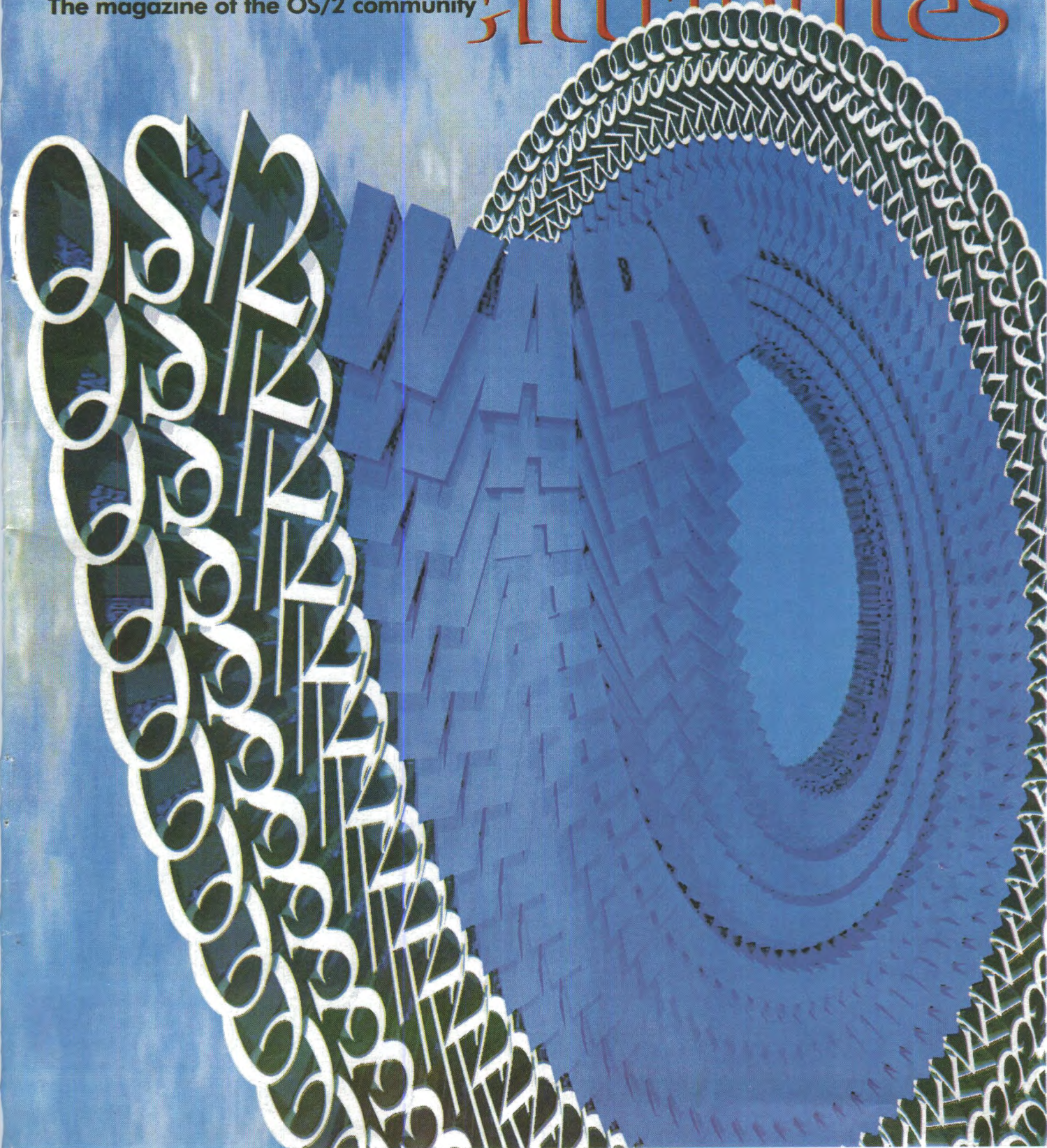


extended attributes

The magazine of the OS/2 community

July 2000 Vol 7 No 7
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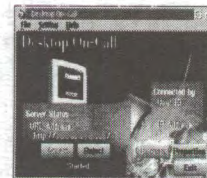
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extended attributes is the award winning monthly magazine of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc.

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Come-back kid?

by Bill Schindler, Editor-in-chief

Is OS/2 the come-back kid of the computer industry?

Hey, it's happened before.

Back in the OS/2 1.2 and 1.3 days, if you mentioned OS/2 to someone the answer was usually either "what's OS/2?" or "is that still around?" At the time, the mainstream computer press regarded OS/2 as an embarrassment because the predicted mass move from DOS to OS/2 never materialized. (*PC Magazine* promoted OS/2 1.0 and 1.1 so hard that readers began complaining. In spite of that, they didn't convince many people to make the jump to OS/2. Proof that having the press on your side won't necessarily make you a winner.)

Yet the people using OS/2 1.3 just kept on using it, in spite of being told "OS/2 is dead."

Come-back I.O

Enter OS/2 2.0. Suddenly there were lots more OS/2 users. And interest increased with each new release of OS/2.

A little after OS/2 Warp 3 shipped, we saw OS/2 pass 10% of market share. That was enough for most of us to feel that OS/2 was finally getting some respect. It seemed that everyone knew what Warp was, and no one was saying that OS/2 was dead.

But for IBM, 10% market share meant that they'd lost the desktop OS battle. They pulled back to focus on corporate sales, Java, and network computing.

Once again, deja vu

The last couple of years seem almost like a repeat of the 1.3 days. Only this time, we keep comparing our current state-of-the-industry to the Warp 3 heyday.

It wasn't that long ago that we were seeing OS/2 ads on TV. (Remember the nuns? David Barnes?) Now we're back to answering "what's OS/2?" and "is that still around?"

And we're back to using OS/2 in spite of being told "OS/2 is dead."

Heigh ho, silver lining

In the midst of all this dreariness, IBM comes along with news that OS/2 sales have exceeded expectations. By millions of dollars. And IBM's promising continued support for at least the next 5-7 years. (In an industry that can't remember where it was three years ago, five years is just shy of infinity.)

Serenity Systems is talking about a deal to ship a new OS/2-based client called the eCommStation.

Odin—which lets OS/2 run Windows 9x and NT applications—is grabbing mainstream computer press attention.

And new OS/2 users seem to keep popping up. (As editor, I hear from a few every week.) And several OS/2 developers who'd let their software languish for a year or more, have recently returned to updating it.

More sales, honest-to-gosh press coverage, more software, new users... Is OS/2 the come-back kid of the computer industry? ☺

Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc (POSSI) is an international organization of computer users with an interest in IBM's OS/2 operating system and related issues.

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OS/2 forums on CompuServe now free

press release

Creative Systems Programming Corporation announced that their computing forums are now publicly available to all users on the World Wide Web absolutely free of any charges. CompuServe is making a radical departure from the previously closed systems employed to build and manage some of the most successful online communities for more than two decades.

All of the Creative Systems forums, including the Linux Forum, the Emerging Technology Forum, the IBM Forum, the Lotus Forum and the Unix Forum are now available to anyone with an AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) screen name. This free access also includes CompuServe Instant Messenger (CSIM), Netscape AOL Instant Messenger, CompuServe and AOL accounts. Now, in addition to the 2.5 million members of CompuServe, the Creative Systems Forums are available to the 22 million members of AOL as well as the 40 million holders of no-charge Instant Messenger accounts.

"This is a very exciting time for us. Now, for the very first time, all of our forums are available to everyone," said Larry B. Finkelstein, President of Creative Systems Programming Corporation. "We've got some great people that are willing to share their knowledge and experience with all participants. These communities are one of the best kept secrets on the Web, and now they're open to everyone that wants to join."

"It's like having your own personal consultants that are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with expertise in every area imaginable," said Julia Partridge, the manager of the IBM Forum.

The Emerging Technology Forum

<http://go.compuserve.com/emergingtechnology?LOC=US>

The Emerging Technology Forum members discuss new and emerging technologies, providing a useful and meaningful context for anyone interested in exploring how specific technologies can change and enhance their personal and professional lives.

The IBM Forum

<http://go.compuserve.com/ibmforum?LOC=US>

The IBM Forum grew out of the ThinkPad and OS/2 communities and has been expanded to include all software and hardware products from IBM. It's the largest virtual IBM User Group in the world, with members sharing their expertise in setting up and maintaining IBM systems, including desktop, midrange, mainframe, mobile and personal systems.

The Lotus Forum

<http://go.compuserve.com/lotusforum?LOC=US>

The Lotus Forum provides free Lotus product technical support to end users, developers and administrators. With a special emphasis on Lotus Notes, Domino and SmartSuite, members of the L-Team are available to assist with any technical or "how to" questions.

Founded in 1984 and a privately-held company, Creative Systems Programming Corporation is a CompuServe Business Partner and full service consulting firm, providing knowledge and community management services to an international clientele.

The screenshot shows the IBM Forum interface on CompuServe. On the left, there's a sidebar with 'Messages' and 'Files' sections. The 'Messages' section lists various topics like 'Enjoy LW95', 'dragtext & url objects', 'Enjoy dial on demand', 'weird LinkWiz problem...', 'Update for GCP', 'CHKDSK/F not working', 'GCP305.zip', 'StarOffice Problem', and 'orantino aco address boo'. The 'Files' section has links for 'View Pictures' and 'Download Files'. The main area displays a message thread titled 'weird LinkWiz problem...'. The message is from 'Nat Hill IV' to 'all' on 10:55 a.m. on 26-May-2000. The thread content starts with 'Hello OS/2 experts;' followed by a detailed description of a problem with LinkWiz software. The thread continues with replies from 'David G. Becker', 'Nat Hill IV', 'Terry Clapp/Manassas Va', 'Nat Hill IV', 'Terry Clapp/Manassas Va', 'Frank Razac', and 'David G. Becker'. At the bottom, there are navigation buttons for 'Previous', 'Next', 'Reply', and 'Forward via E-mail'.

Don't know much about history

by Esther Schindler

The OS/2 community is trapped in present time. While the question, "Do we have a future?" is a debate best left to "advocacy" sessions and late night beer hall discussions, I fear that the larger problem is that we're losing our past. That is, we don't have a clearly recorded history, a group memory that makes it easy to know and understand where we came from.

This point was forcibly brought home to me during WarpTech, when the right answer to a Warped Jeopardy question was "Who is David Barnes?" The audience participant didn't know the answer, although Barnes has been off the OS/2 scene for only about four years. While that may seem like eons in computing years, Barnes was as much a recognizable spokesman as OS/2 ever had—an icon (or desktop object?) to a large community of people. For his identity to disappear so thoroughly in a few short years is a disheartening event.

Group memory

The problem, naturally, isn't limited to OS/2. The entire computer industry suffers from a lack of context. With new computer users buying a "first machine" every year, few people will know, or care, how the PC on their desktop evolved. Though it may dismay us old-timers, most of them don't need to know. They're better off learning how to back up their data, or reading an application's manual... not that they engage in those activities, either.

However, even if the mainstream computer user doesn't need to know his PC's genealogy, the information is available. It's easy to find a wide variety of moments frozen in time. Pick up a dusty book on Windows 3.1 "secrets." Find an issue of *PC Magazine* circa 1991. Read a good biography, such as Steven Manes' and Paul Andrews' *Gates: How Microsoft's Mogul Reinvented an Industry-And Made Himself the Richest Man in America* (which I think is an immensely fair-minded book). Buy a copy of the recently reissued *Fire in the Valley* (www.fireinthevalley.com) by Paul Freiberger and Michael Swaine, a history of the PC's early years that I enthusiastically recommend to anyone that will listen. (If you ever doubted that this industry has always "made it up as they went along," this book will disabuse you of the notion.)

Another way to remember "how we used to think" is to search an older CompuServe forums for a generic topic like "consulting." You'll find archived message threads from, say, 1987, which will give you a clear picture of what we thought was important, back then, and how we viewed the industry's future. (Not that much has changed. We argued

about PC versus Mac, vi versus emacs, and the comparative merits of laser printer brands.)

David who?

But OS/2 users have relatively few resources of this nature. The last "learn about OS/2 book" was released four years ago. While there are way too many abandoned OS/2 Web sites, with the "frozen" context of "not updated for two years," none of them would have given our hapless game show contestant information about David Barnes, much less what David Barnes meant to the community.

Fame is always fleeting, and I'm not sure how much David personally cares about our fond memories of him saying, "I don't *think* so!"—but those incidents should be recorded on more than the fallible memories of us OS/2 oldsters. It's not just that we forget, but our later experiences cloud the way we perceive the past. (If you need an example to prove the point, just ask any bitter divorced individual to explain how much and how completely he'd once been in love with his ex-wife.)

Frighteningly enough, the longest-running journal of the OS/2 community is (gulp) extended attributes. In some way, if we don't record it, it didn't happen. I'm not particularly glad of this fact; it's way too much like finding out that, after six months on the job, one has seniority at the company.

It does, however, raise the importance of our mutual responsibility to report "what is happening" to and in the OS/2 user community... along with the status of drivers, applications, and the like.

Making it happen

That reminds me, too, that public acknowledgements and thank-yous are more than gracious appreciation of a volunteer's time. They're keepsakes of special moments that, without public recognition, may fade into obscurity.

So, although we've devoted a whole feature to WarpTech in this issue, I'd like to point out a few of my own vivid memories of the event—and of the people who made them possible. In no particular order, I'll remember:

- Burke Swanson—on one hour of sleep inside of 24. Not only did Burke carefully plan audio-visual facilities that wouldn't fail (he had two backup projectors and two backup data displays), but he wouldn't go home until everything worked perfectly.
- Jerry Stuckle, installing the Visual Age software development tools at midnight—followed by a download of about 76MB to add fixpacks. Just so he could volunteer

his time, the next morning, to show WarpTech attendees how object oriented programming works.

- Craig Greenwood, holding up that first valuable door prize during the Friday luncheon—an AOL CD with 500 free hours! Warring with that laughter is my mental picture of Craig looking around the exhibit hall with exhaustion and pride battling for preeminence. Craig, as WarpTech's captain, never lost his temper despite a crew of unruly volunteers who had the silly idea that earning a living or seeing one's family should take priority over WarpTech responsibilities.
- Randell Flint's face at the rodeo when the Jeopardy music theme began to play. After he'd downloaded every possible variation on that jingle, subjected his coworkers to the torture of listening to each one dozens of times, and relentlessly practiced the Warped Jeopardy presentation for hours... well, it was obviously karma for the Rawhide rodeo to play the same music during a lull between the calf-roping and the bull-riding.
- Dinner with Frans Morre, several days after WarpTech, on his way home from a tour of Arizona. Or perhaps a more graphic memory will be the 84 email messages he exchanged with Bill Schindler on the Monday before WarpTech—when Frans' hard drive crashed eight hours before the Proceedings CD image was slated to go to the CD duplication service. (Fortunately, the service was able to give us 24 hours grace and the CDs were ready on time, but there were a few desperate hours.)
- Richard Klemmer, volunteering to run the Phoenix OS/2 Society's booth at Warpstock, this fall.
- A room full of user group members, carefully smacking mailing labels onto copies of the magazine... and, come to think of it, mostly lined up waiting for me to slice-and-dice the sheets of labels.
- The full bag of speaker gifts I started with... and the bag, empty, at the end of the weekend. Those 30 wind-chimes are my personal symbol of the time and energy that the presenters donated to the OS/2 community. Not only did they come to the event at their own expense from as far away as Australia, but most of them spent hours putting together slides, researching their material, and standing up in front of a room full of strangers... all to help someone else figure out how to make sense of a technical topic.

- Two attendees, whom I don't know at all, talking in a hallway. One said, "Oh! I've had to solve that problem, too. Let me help you." Putting those two people in the same place at the same time is the essence of what I believe WarpTech to be about—and I'm happy to have participated in a small way to making that happen.

These are a few of my memories. I'm glad for the opportunity to share them with you. ☺

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Who needs an OS?

by Esther Schindler

OS/2 users have long struggled to find applications that are native to our operating system. We've looked for Windows 3.1 applications that run well in WinOS2. Or, in many cases, we've ended up with a separate computer running another OS, just so we could run a business or personal application that isn't available for OS/2.

However, there's a new way to run programs—over the Web. In the last year or so, Application Service Providers (ASPs) have emerged, promising the functionality of applications without the necessity of downloading or running their proprietary code. Best of all, many of these programs run on any PC with an up-to-date Web browser.

Not every one will work. Some ASP applications require Java plug-ins that aren't available for OS/2. Others require Netscape add-ins that aren't supported by the OS/2 Netscape browser, or limit functionality to OS/2 users. For instance, the conferencing service at webex.com will let an OS/2 user participate with a Java client—but he can't run a conference, and many features are unavailable. However, most of the sites carefully document their requirements and give you some kind of free tour, so you won't find yourself spending money on an application you can't use.

You should also keep in mind that these tools were designed with high-speed access in mind. They work fine if you have a cable modem or DSL service. But you should expect poky system response, at best, over a modem connection.

Nonetheless, the ASP model does offer OS/2 users another way to get their hands on more applications—from anywhere. Here are a few samples from literature that has passed across my desk recently. I haven't used any of these personally under OS/2, at least not for more than a few minutes, so I don't vouch for them. But it'll give you an idea of what's possible.

A new kind of chat

Ever wandered into a chat room and been disappointed by its confusing design and lack of features? If so, Magnetic Corporation's new site, ChatMachine.com (www.chatmachine.com), may offer a refreshing change of pace.

ChatMachine.com uses Magnetic Corporation's ClearChat Java chat server and client software to create a user-friendly chat and messaging site. Visitors to the site will find free Java chat rooms without a lot of clutter.

The ClearChat software enables site administrators to block certain words and phrases likely to offend users. Administrators can also disconnect individual users if needed.

Chat communities include singles, teens, sports, college, music, technology and romance. Chat topics include cars, computers, games, television, movies and wrestling. Visitors can use one of the public chat rooms or create their own, which gives them the option of deciding who can enter. The site gives visitors the ability to customize their chat experience with different fonts, sound, and background colors. ChatMachine.com does not require visitors to sign in or register, although visitors must enter a chat nickname before entering a room.

ChatMachine also provides free bulletin boards, or forums, for users to communicate; topics mirror those of the chat rooms. Visitors may add icons to their posts to express emotions or to identify themselves. Individual forums are controlled by moderators, who have the power to edit or delete any posts to their forums.

NetLedger accounting

NetLedger, Inc. is an application service provider that enables small businesses to run their companies totally online, and delivers a Web-based accounting and business management platform.

The company promises "seamlessly integrated business applications that combine enterprise performance and reliability with unprecedented ease of use and low prices." The company's standard offering includes NetLedger, a full-featured, multi-user, Web-based accounting solution for small businesses and organizations, available at \$4.95 per month per user; NetLedger Basic, a free Web-based business finance solution for small businesses and organizations; and NetLedger Personal, a free Web-based personal finance solution for the consumer. For more information visit the Web site at www.netledger.com.

Team collaboration

eProject.com, Inc.'s eProject express is a free Web-based Team Collaboration software application. eProject express allows project teams to meet in a virtual team environment anytime, anywhere, securely sharing information, assigning tasks, setting deadlines, and effectively managing project progress from any computer with Internet access.

Features include a Project Calendar, Document Sharing, Task Management, Team Directory, and Messaging capabilities. Because the software is 100% Web-based, no disks or downloading are required. Set-up is one-step simple: customer's simply fill out a one-page sign up sheet, choose a password, and log on. The software is focused on saving time and money for project teams, allowing them to

work effectively without having to fax, overnight, or play "voice mail tag."

eProject express is available free by signing up at www.eproject.com.

WebEx meetings online

WebEx provides real-time, interactive multimedia communications services for Web

sites. WebEx's services meeting-enable the Web sites of customers and partners. To date, WebEx has launched three services on its interactive platform-WebEx Meeting Center, WebEx Business Exchange, and WebEx OnCall. End-users access these interactive services through the co-branded Web sites of customers and partners as well

as www.webex.com. WebEx's services enable end-users to spontaneously share content and applications in a seamless environment with integrated audio and video (though not with the Java client under OS/2). ☺

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After an excellent lunch, Mike Persell gave a discussion titled "The OS/2-Linux Road Map," though it really was an introduction to what IBM felt about Linux. Mike gave specific examples of functions Linux does well (print servers and distributed processing) and discussed how IBM was going to be sure Linux is able to talk to "heavy iron" and make IBM servers talk to Linux systems. The slides were nice and the interchange was pleasant, but there was no information about how one could connect or work from an OS/2 to Linux station other than TCP/IP.

Early on Sunday morning, David Azarewicz chatted about his extensive experience in home networking. He discussed the theory and the practical issues involved. For example, he advised not to use two of the same brand of networking cards in one computer. Use two different cards if you plan to have that computer act as a bridge between the Internet and your home network. We talked about wiring, cables, connectors, servers, and all manner of TCP/IP settings. David has an extensive Web site (www.deltasys.org/techindex.html) with all the details.

Finally, I attended Rollin White's "Making the Most of Mesa/2" talk. This was a more basic Mesa/2 talk than his Friday talk on Real Time Feed functions. Rollin introduced the new Mesa version 2.3, discussed Sundial Systems' product support, and mentioned other support sources (www.guide.mesa2.com/guide).

Rollin showed a number of configuration tools I had not used before, such as the ability to configure personal sets for smartfill, and using a property setting to have a cell color vary by value of the cell. It's nice to know how to show red for deficit in a financial sheet! We were reminded to use the pre-set buttons for \$ and %—that brought a laugh from the audience, as all of us recalled doing things the hard way. Mesa files can now be exported to HTML format and mailed to others. Pre-written scripts are available for some tasks at

www.scoug.com/sundialsig/index.html.

Finally, we learned how to add buttons for special functions under Preferences. All in all, Rollin added a lot to my knowledge of Mesa/2—another excellent OS/2 program.

Matt Walsh is an OS/2 user who supports his hobbies by working as an emergency physician.

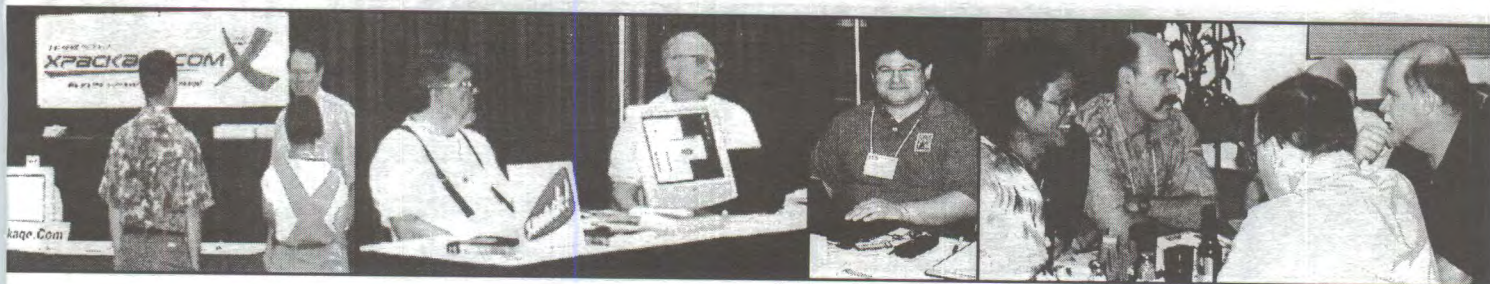
Warped Jeopardy

by Brad Montroy

When I first heard that WarpTech would have a session called Warped Jeopardy, my reaction was, "What the heck is that?" Well, Warped Jeopardy turns out to be a lot like the TV game-show Jeopardy, except that the categories and clues are all about OS/2. The show was created by Sundial Systems and put on by them. The entire thing was very well done. A very good computer program projected, onto a big screen, the Jeopardy wall of categories and dollar amounts.

It all worked pretty much like the TV show, with a few enhancements to allow audience participation. Three "celebrity" contestants each had a color and a "team" that they played for. The Sundial folks handed out tickets that were color coded red, blue, and green, so all the audience members had a colored ticket that linked them to a "team." Every so often, a color and number was chosen at random; the audience member that matched that ticket color and number was called to come up on stage to answer a question.

Prizes were awarded for correct answers—usually a box of Rice-A-Roni with a red, blue, or green spine. Also, if the con-





testants were stumped by a question, the audience members were invited to answer. Small trinkets were awarded for these correct answers.

The "celebrity" contestants were people who are well known in OS/2 circles. The Red team contestant was Bill Schindler; the other contestants were Steve Schiffman, and Wayne Swanson. The moderator (think Alex Trebek) was Randell Flint, of Sundial Systems. I had a red ticket so I thought, "Hey, I'm in luck. Our 'god' of OS/2, Bill Schindler, will cream these guys." That was especially exciting since there was a prize for all of the winning "team" members: a 10% discount on any Sundial product.

Well, Bill did well at first, taking an early lead. (He was really good at the POSSI category. I wonder why?) But, later on, in Double Jeopardy, our god of OS/2 turned out to have feet of clay. Apparently due to tiredness from overwork on WarpTech and a

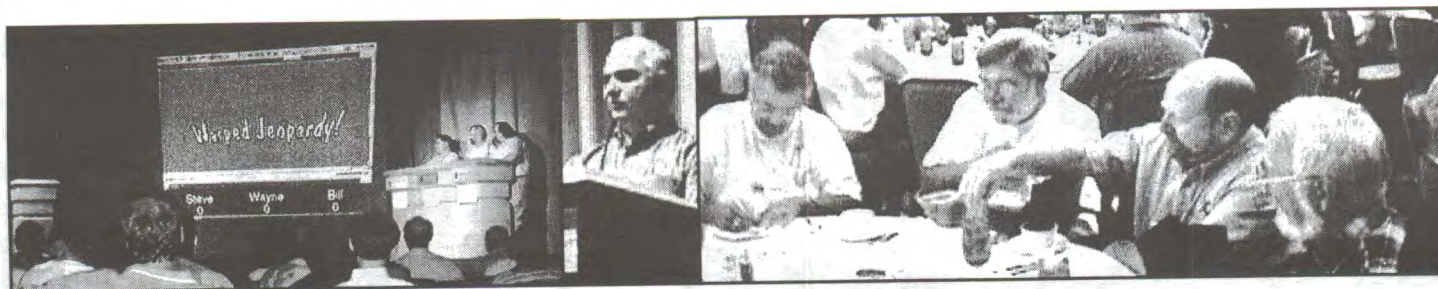
failing memory (surely not due to advancing age!), Bill got farther and farther behind, and eventually finished last. Personally, I'm not holding it against him. I didn't want to buy any of those Sundial products anyway. Right. Yeah.

Periodically, the game was interrupted for commercials. These were some of the OS/2 commercials that IBM aired a few years ago. Some had David Barnes in them. Right after one of these "spots," an audience member was called up to answer a question, to which the answer was Dave Barnes, but this person was apparently new to OS/2 and didn't know who Dave Barnes was. But, after some hints from the moderator he answered "Who was the guy in the video I just saw?" and that answer was accepted. Everyone had a good laugh.

Overall the presentation was great. I really enjoyed it and I think everyone else did too. We all had a good time and

learned some interesting trivia about OS/2. Here's one of the tougher questions to mull over: "Who is considered the 'Father of OS/2?'" This question stumped the panel and several audience members too—I had an answer but it was wrong—but someone finally got it. Sorry, but I don't remember who it is now myself. You'll have to look it up.

Brad Montroy is a founding member of the Phoenix OS/2 Society.



Bay Area members gather

by Neil Waldhauer, zonker@well.com

The e-Business Conference and Expo provided an excellent room for the gathering of OS/2 users in the San Francisco Bay Area on June 13. We were supplied with an overhead projector, and enough soda and cookies for a crowd of 75.

Julien Pierre, our scheduled speaker, had to cancel due to illness. So we chose to open the meeting to a discussion of OS/2 topics of concern to the attendees. Without doubt, the hottest topic for our group is high speed internet access.

A second topic is OS/2 installation and applying fixpaks. Network configuration is an issue for those with DSL and not so much for those who don't. Everyone present related his experiences on these topics. David Alfano brought his OS/2 laptop and we did some on-the-spot troubleshooting of his network configuration. Collectively, we had quite a bit of OS/2 knowledge!

The attendees expressed enthusiasm for arranging another meeting. In addition, several people emailed me privately to say they would miss the meeting because they needed it to be on an evening or weekend, or that they

needed earlier notice of the event. I think that, with better use of Warpcast and other Web resources, we may be able to attract 25 people to our next meeting, or about double what we had for this meeting.

I would love to meet someplace that has good network access, and preferably an OS/2 laptop available. Even network access and any computer with a browser and a monitor large enough for a few people to see what is going on would be good. I'll bet that, as a group, we have a lot of OS/2 online knowledge.

Several people have volunteered to help in some way to make the next meeting happen. If you have any thoughts on when and how to have our next meeting, or if you're interested in attending the next meeting (whenever and wherever it turns out to happen), please send me an email message!

I want to express a special thanks to Katie Cade of CMP for providing the room, and to Warpcast, OS2.org, and POSSI for helping to get the word out about the meeting. ☺

HOW GIG/net.sig

by Sam McDonald

The HOW GIG/net.sig will not be meeting in July. The KDC (where we meet) will be closed during the first week of July for vacation. So, we're taking the month off, too.

Our next meeting will be August 1, 2000 at KDC. ☺

Joining the discussion

The Phoenix OS/2 Society runs a private unmoderated email discussion list. In the 20 to 40 messages posted daily, OS/2 users discuss the best brands to buy, help one another debug a technical problem, and occasionally discuss the computing community of which OS/2 is a part.

To join the list, fill out the form at www.possi.org/lists.html.

While there's no requirement that participants be a member of the Society, it's generally expected that the people who use the service will support it financially. ☺

Coming events

A list of events scheduled by the Phoenix OS/2 Society and other OS/2 user groups.

July 2000

- 4** net.sig (Internet SIG) and HOW GIG. No meeting this month since KDC is closed for vacation.

- 5** Magazine submission deadline for August issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 480-585-5852.

- 11** No general meeting—we're taking the summer off.

- 29** Board meeting. Watch the discussion list for announcements, or send a message to president@possi.org to learn where the meeting will be held. Because the "folding, stapling, and mutilating" of the magazine will be performed by an outside company, we'll be able to focus on the board meeting... and the potluck brunch!

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August 2000

- 1** net.sig (Internet SIG) and HOW GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Sam MacDonald. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

- 5** Magazine submission deadline for September issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 480-585-5852.

- 8** No general meeting—we're taking the summer off.

- 26** Board meeting.

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2000

- 5** net.sig (Internet SIG) and HOW GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Sam MacDonald. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

- 5** Magazine submission deadline for October issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 480-585-5852.

- 9** Warpstock in Philadelphia. See www.warpstock.org for more information.

- 12** General meeting; Putting Odin to work.

- 30** Board meeting.

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2000

- 3** net.sig (Internet SIG) and HOW GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Sam MacDonald. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

- 5** Magazine submission deadline for November issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 480-585-5852.

- 10** General meeting.

- 13** Warpstock Europe, Karlsruhe, Germany. See www.warpstock.de for more information.

- 28** Board meeting.

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2000

- 5** Magazine submission deadline for December issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 480-585-5852.

- 7** net.sig (Internet SIG) and HOW GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Sam MacDonald. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

- 14** General meeting.

- 25** Board meeting.

November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2000

- 5** net.sig (Internet SIG) and HOW GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Sam MacDonald. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

- 5** Magazine submission deadline for January issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 480-585-5852.

- 12** General meeting.

- 23** Board meeting.

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Meeting locations

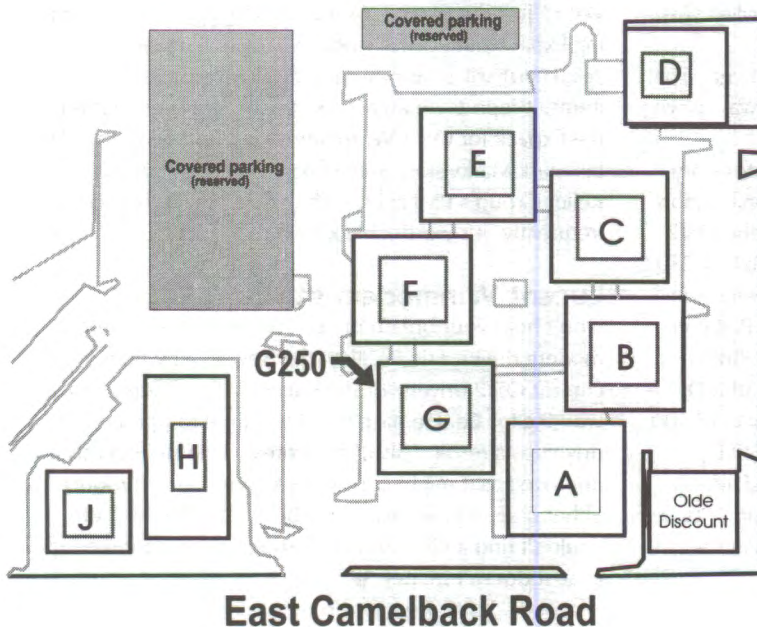
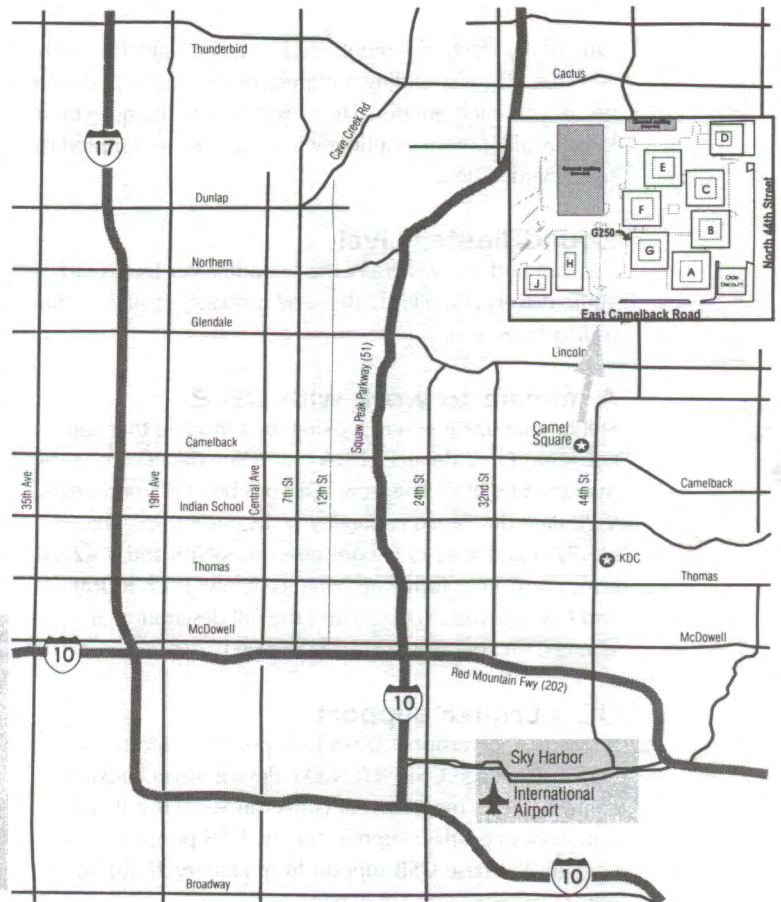
Directions to meeting locations.

General meetings are held at the Camel Square office complex, Room G250, 44th Street and Camelback (northwest corner), Phoenix.

From the Red Mountain Freeway (202), exit at 44th Street and go north $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. From the Squaw Peak (51), exit at Colter (southbound) or Highland (northbound); follow signs to Camelback Rd and go east $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The "How OS/2 Works General Interest Group" and the Internet SIG (net.sig) meet at Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44th St, Suite 400. That's just north of Thomas, in the building with the green dome. Plenty of free parking is available in the garage behind the building. 🚗

If the mailing label on the back cover says "sample" then this may be the only copy of extended attributes that you will ever receive. If you want to keep getting the magazine (and receive all the other benefits of membership), you must join! A 12 month membership in the USA is only \$30. (See the form for membership pricing in other areas.) Tear out the application, fill it in, and mail it with your membership fee today!



North 44th Street

A map of Camel Square, the new location for the Society's monthly general meeting. We will be meeting in room G250. You may park anywhere except in the reserved (covered) parking spaces.

In the driver seat

New support for your OS/2 hardware

compiled by Esther Schindler and Bill Schindler

One of the "factoids" mentioned by IBMers at WarpTech was that IBM is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on drivers, each quarter. The only difficulty seems to be in locating all of them in a timely fashion—we're tempted to say, "Hard Where?"

SoundBlaster Live!

You can find a new beta of the SoundBlaster Live! OS/2 audio drivers at the OS/2 BBS and probably at all the other usual places, too.

A modem to work with OS/2

Still on dial-up? If you're looking for a modem that you know has OS/2 drivers, check out 3Com data/fax modem marketed by IBM. This new "Options by IBM" modem has V.90 data download capability, V.17 (14.4 Kbps) fax, MNP2-4 and V.42 data compression, MNP5 and V.42bis error correction, firmware enhanceability (Flash ROM)—and OS/2 drivers. You can find the full description at www.ibm.link.ibm.com/usalets&parms=H_100-201.

USB printer support

IBM released version 1.00 of USB printer support. The English-language USBPRTEN.EXE device driver package contains IBM's most current Universal Serial Bus (USB) printer device-driver support for any USB printers. It also contains the base USB support from January 2000; no other USB packages are needed.

Find it at [ftp://ftp.software.ibm.com/ps/products/os2/os2ddpak/usbprten.exe](http://ftp.software.ibm.com/ps/products/os2/os2ddpak/usbprten.exe)

Also, IBM's recently updated its Postscript drivers. That affects printers from Agfa, Apple... well, all the way down through Xerox.

But those aren't the only device driver updates from IBM. In late April, IBM also updated the "Personalization Editor" for several ThinkPad models, including the OS/2 support. Version 4.15 adds support for the ThinkPad 770Z and "Utility packages has been re-organized" (whatever that means). This applies to the following ThinkPad computers: ThinkPad 365X, 365XD, ThinkPad 380, 380D, 380E, 380ED, 380XD, 380Z, ThinkPad 385D, 385ED, 385XD, ThinkPad 560, 560E, 560X, 560Z, ThinkPad 600, 600E, 600X, ThinkPad 760C, 760CD, 760L, 760LD, ThinkPad 760E, 760ED, 760EL, 760ELD, ThinkPad 760XD, 760XL, ThinkPad 765D, 765L, ThinkPad 770, 770E, 770ED, 770X, 770Z. You'll find the links at the Device Driver site.



Other updates or new drivers at the IBM device driver site include:

- Network card support for the Accton PnP MPX2 Ethernet Adapter EN1660R01
- multimedia support for the PCMCIA CD-ROM from CNF, Inc.
- a PCMCIA I/O from Quatech, Inc. (SPP-100 Single Parallel port with EPP)
- PCMCIA Mass Storage: Shining Technology's CitiROM adapter (Enhanced IDE)

Sound card driver tips

This page hasn't been updated in more than two years, but if you're searching for sound card tips and tricks, it may still offer some good information. See www.rodsbooks.com/sound/index.html.

Benchmarking OS/2 systems

Do you want to see how your new OS/2 system compares to others? Want to find out how fast OS/2 runs on, say, an AMD microprocessor compared to an Intel CPU? You can download the latest copy of Trevor Hemsley's Sysbench (for free), and examine a comparison of the data sent in. See <http://warped.cswnet.com/Sysbench/index.html>.

Another driver resource

We've just discovered a Web site that specializes in reporting fixpacks and driver updates, at www.warpupdates.de/english/hard_powermanage.html. Among several other items, it reports on an MPTS update, the latest status on the fixpack for OS/2 Warp Server, an update to the OS/2 Lexmark Markvision, and a fax printer driver update for the Keller Group's PMFaxLite. The site seems to be updated frequently. It's worth checking out.

Lucent Winmodem status

Don't hold your breath on an update for the Lucent Winmodem driver. Eric Bentley, the developer who wrote the current OS/2 drivers for the Lucent Winmodem, is now working for Be. He hasn't had any time to update the drivers as a result. "Also," he writes, "I have to get this work approved as it might constitute a competitive product. Either case, it looks like it will be awhile if at all." We couldn't find a URL for the existing driver... but we suppose it doesn't matter. ☹

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Solution: Junk Spy

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in the war against spam.



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<http://www.os2ss.com>

- Over 2 gigabytes of OS/2 shareware and freeware
- Mailing lists such as OS2USER and WarpCast
- Home of several popular OS/2 web sites such as OS/2 e-Zine!, EDM/2, OS/2 Connect, Loren Bandiera's OS/2 News and Rumors Page, and Timur Tabi's New OS/2 User page.
- The OS/2 Discussion Forum
- Online shareware registration and commercial software purchasing

Join the Supersite Members Club

Club members get special deals on commercial software and \$2.50 off every shareware application they register through BMT Micro. Members also get FTP access to the Supersite archive and space for their personal web page. See <http://www.os2ss.com/club/> for details.

Objecting to databases

Part 3: Creating some fetching little methods

by Bill Schindler, bill@bitranch.com

In the last two articles ("Objecting to databases," April 2000 and May 2000), we created the core part of the Database class and you learned some Object Rexx along the way. In this article, we'll add the ability to fetch multiple-row results from a SQL select.

Note that the code in this article relies on code that was introduced in the prior two articles. If you missed those articles, send me an email.

More database methods

The code listing contains more code that goes in the Database class. These three new methods extend Database so that you can use it to return all of the result rows from a SQL select.

In order to get multiple results from the database, you need to:

- Prepare the SQL statement
- Open the statement
- Fetch each row
- Close the statement

Because most SQL databases refer to opening and closing the statement as "opening and closing a cursor" we use the name "cursor" as part of our open and close methods. (The cursor tracks the position in the result, much like a cursor in a word processor tracks the current position in the text.)

If you examine the listing, you'll see that the SQL calls in each of the methods follow the items in the bulleted list above.

How do you interpret this?

On line 41, you'll see a Rexx instruction that I try not to use: INTERPRET. I try not to use INTERPRET because it's often slower than other approaches, it can hide syntax errors, and the INTERPRET instruction can result in confusing code, even to the person who wrote it!

If you look at several Rexx programs that the INTERPRET instruction, you'll probably find that the VALUE function would have served as well. For example, we could have used an INTERPRET on line 15 like this:

```
INTERPRET stmtstem "=" ""
```

Instead, the VALUE function is used to assign a default value to the stem variable:

```
CALL Value stmtstem, ""
```

In the case of line 41, though, INTERPRET is the simplest and cleanest solution.

The problem we have is that the name of the stem variable that contains the field information is itself stored in a

variable. As far as Object Rexx is concerned, our stem variable's name is just another string.

So, in this one case, we need to dynamically build a Rexx statement and have INTERPRET process it.

Getting arrays

Even without the INTERPRET instruction, the statement on line 41 may seem a little strange. The constructed statement looks like:

```
a = fld.-makearray
```

In Classic Rexx, stem variables are arrays. Object Rexx lets you treat a stem variable like any other full class, uh, class. So, you can use DO OVER to step through all the values in the stem:

```
DO n OVER fld.
```

```
SAY fld.n
```

```
END
```

When you use an object in DO OVER (like fld.) in this way, Object Rexx automatically calls the object's makearray method. The values assigned to the control variable (n in the example) are the values returned by makearray.

You might expect the makearray method to return an array with the contents of the stem variable. Instead, makearray returns an array of the tails (the "indexes") in the stem.

So, if our fld. stem contained fld.firstname and fld.lastname, makearray would return an array containing FIRSTNAME and LASTNAME.

Now that you know how it works, why didn't we just use stmtstem in the DO OVER?

The reason is that stmtstem is one level of indirection away from the actual stem variable. Since stmtstem is a simple variable, it cannot be converted to an array and you'll get a syntax error.

So we use INTERPRET to manually do what Object Rexx normally does automatically: call makearray on the stem variable.

Putting it to work

Here's an example of using the Database class as developed so far:

```
/* FetchTest.cmd */
db = .database-new("warptech")
sel = "select * from assocperson where associd < 10"
inf = .directory-new
stmt = .database-statementID
db-openCursor(sel, stmt)
DO WHILE db-fetch(inf, stmt)
```



```
.output~lineout(inf~firstname inf~lastname)
DO n OVER inf
  inf[n] = ''
END
db~closeCursor
EXIT
::requires "Database.rxx"
```

In the first line, we create a database object. Since this example is connecting to the WarpTech database, it passes that name to Database's init method. (You can't connect to the WarpTech database, so you'll need to modify this code to make it work with one of your own databases.)

Next, the SQL select statement is created. Then a directory object is created to hold the fetch results. The final bit of house-keeping is to create a statement ID.

The openCursor method is passed the SQL select and the statement ID. The openCursor method prepares the SQL statement and opens it. (In MySQL, this basically does all the work of processing the SQL statement. The following fetches just return the results.)

The program then loops while there's any results to fetch. The fetch method gets the directory (for storing the results) and the statement ID.

For each result row, the program prints the first name and last name. The result directory is then cleared, just to be safe.

When it's done fetching and processing the results, the program closes the cursor.

Coming up

This just about finishes the Database class. In upcoming articles, we'll begin looking at how to build a Table class that makes accessing SQL tables really easy. ☺

Bill Schindler is the author of *Down to Earth REXX*, a book that teaches programming using Classic Rexx. Bill is also the developer of the Smack! label program, and is currently working with XML and XSL.

```
1: /*===== openCursor =====
2: */
3: ::method openCursor
4:   EXPOSE dbId sqlca. flds.
5:   USE ARG exp, stmt
6:   IF stmt <> .nil THEN
7:     DO
8:       stmtstem = stmt || '.'
9:     END
10:  ELSE
11:    DO
12:      stmtstem = 'flds.'
13:      stmt = 'flds'
14:    END
15:  CALL Value stmtstem, ''
16:  CALL SQLPrepare stmt, exp
17:  CALL CheckSQLError 'PREPARE', sqlca.
18:  IF sqlca.sqlcode = 0 THEN
19:    DO
20:      CALL SQLOpen stmt
21:      CALL CheckSQLError 'OPEN', sqlca.
22:    END
23:  RETURN sqlca.sqlcode
24:
25: /*===== fetch =====
26: */
27: ::method fetch
28:   EXPOSE dbId sqlca. flds.
29:   USE ARG fields, stmt
30:   IF stmt <> .nil THEN
31:     DO
32:       stmtstem = stmt || '.'
33:     END
34:   ELSE
35:     DO
36:       stmtstem = 'flds.'
37:       stmt = 'flds'
38:     END
39:   v = SQLFetch(stmt)
40:   CALL CheckSQLError 'FETCH', sqlca.
41:   INTERPRET "a =" stmtstem || "~makearray"
42:   DO n OVER a
43:     fields[ n ] = Value(stmtstem || n)
44:   END
45:   RETURN (v <> 0)
46:
47: /*===== closeCursor =====
48: */
49: ::method closeCursor
50:   EXPOSE dbId sqlca. flds.
51:   USE ARG stmt
52:   IF stmt = .nil THEN
53:     stmt = 'flds'
54:   CALL SQLClose stmt
55:   RETURN sqlca.sqlcode
```


IBM Desktop On-Call

by John Sandercock, jsanderc@american-club.net

Desktop On-Call is a new product from IBM Japan which has received very little publicity in the United States. Desktop On-Call (DTC) is OS/2 software which uses Java to give computer users remote access to their OS/2 desktops. The program requires nothing more than a Web browser and TCP/IP to control a PC remotely. Version 2.5 for OS/2 has been shipping since September 1999.

Essentially, Desktop On-Call is an http server which sets itself up to "serve" images of an OS/2 desktop across the Web. An image of your desktop appears in the window of the remote user's Web browser. What makes DTC so cool is that you can click on the icons you see, across the network, and run your PC from somewhere else. DTC also has file transfer, security and logging features appropriate for use on the Web.

What can you do with DTC?

I run a Web server so my colleagues and I can look up company circulars, contracts, and other documents while at home or travelling. I installed DTC on another machine on our LAN and created a link to it from my Web site. Now, my colleagues with access to the secure area of the Web site have an easy link to a machine which can access the company's claims database. For a small company, this kind of access is very helpful. Plus, it requires no programming or special software and training for users.

Like other remote access software, using DTC is not the fastest way to run your PC, particularly over the Internet. But, in my experience, it runs as well as NetOp for OS/2 and LapLink for Windows, two other remote access solutions I have investigated, and it's been far more stable than LapLink. What really sets DTC apart is its ease of use. You need nothing on the client side except a Java-enabled Web browser.

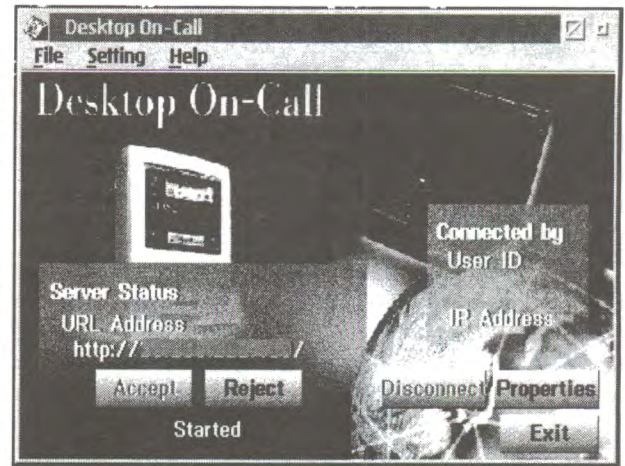
As with most Java programs, performance improves with additional RAM. I have been told that DTC runs acceptably on a machine with dial-up access to the Internet, but I don't have the equipment to test dial-up access.

Desktop on Call
\$39.95

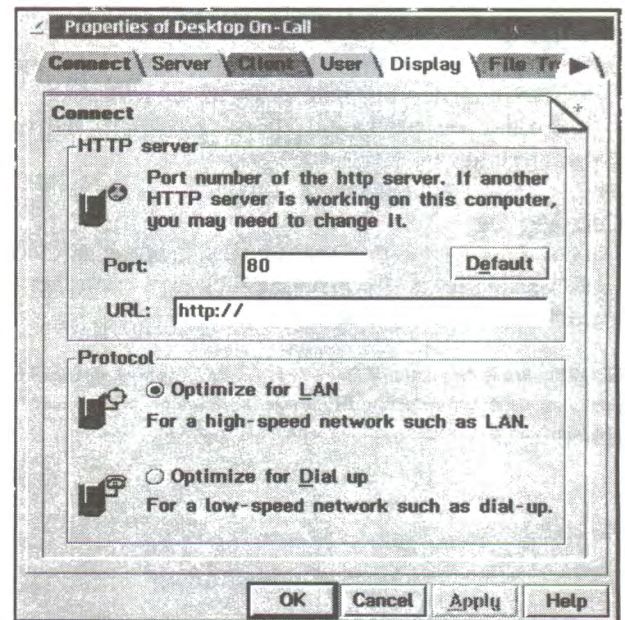
IBM Corp
www.ibm.com

Side effects

You should be able to access your OS/2 desktop from anywhere, as long as you have Web access, even if the remote computer isn't running OS/2. You can run your OS/2 machine remotely from a Windows PC with Internet Explorer, and (according to IBM) you can run it from a Macintosh.



This has broader implications than the convenience of remote desktop access. OS/2 users (on a TCP/IP LAN) who find themselves alone in a sea of Windows users could install DTC on their PCs and access their desktops from anywhere in the office, on campus, or at home.



OS/2 developers could use DTC to demo their software to prospective purchasers who did not use OS/2. Those purchasers could even run that OS/2 software from their Web browsers without needing to know it ran on OS/2. [But it sure would be slow! —Editor]

Getting it

Finding DTOC isn't especially easy. You can read more about the software at www.jp.ibm.com/esbu/E/dtoc. To buy the application, you need to make a note of the product ID number (11K6016), and then go

to "Shop IBM" at www.ibm.com. DTOC costs \$39.95 and is delivered via download. ☺

John is a maritime lawyer working in marine insurance in NYC. He uses OS/2 every day at work, for personal productivity and TCP/IP networking; at

home, he hardly has time for computers. Among John's hobbies (apart from reading everything) are wine, sailing and the Web.

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CompDeux: beyond comparison

by Samuel Little

I'm sure this has happened to you. You created a letter, a program, or maybe an HTML page for your killer Web site. But, after letting it sit for a while, you forgot where you left off, or you fixed something and don't remember what you did or how you did it. Fortunately, you'd kept back-up versions of the document—but the thought of eyeballing the two to find the changes is daunting.

To solve a problem like this, you need comparison software. OS/2 ships with comp.com, a text-based comparison utility which compares two files byte-by-byte, but its usefulness is rather limited beyond just seeing if two files are identical. The shareware utility PMDiff did line-by-line comparisons; it was pretty, but it was also slow.

If your file comparison needs are more serious, you might find useful James Davis Veale's utilities for OS/2, mainly CompDeux, which compares two text files; it was designed for comparing a programmer's source-code files. (The utilities are also available for Win9x/NT and DOS, and those versions are named CompSerf and CompLite, respectively.).

CompDeux

CompDeux can compare files in either line or word detail. "PGM" mode is similar to word mode, but separates "words" at common programming delimiters, such as periods, semicolons, mathematical operators, and intervening spaces.

Other behaviors are configurable through a setup menu, such as screen colors or special rules (for example, you can tell CompDeux to ignore comments in program code). You can even replace patterns so that, for instance, all strings in ##/##/## format are treated the same when compared.

When CompDeux displays its results, the mouse is taken over for window scrolling. Move the mouse to shift the display contents in those directions. The mouse cursor disappears and is unavailable to OS/2. This action can be toggled on and off by pressing the left and right mouse buttons at the same time.

There are five display formats, with a side-by-side view of both files the default.

You can search for text, print reports, and "bounce" lines from one file to another (which can be saved by printing the results to a file) through the use of commands.

So how far can you go with a program like this? Pretty far! I fed CompDeux's slower sister program, TigDeux two

35MB files with about 1500 differences. It took nearly 20 minutes to complete the PGM-mode comparison (the slowest type) on my computer (a 133 MHz Pentium with 96MB RAM and lots of free disk space), but the results came up just fine. While CompDeux uses VIO fonts and resizable windows, the program shows its text-mode roots. It has no menus or drag-and-drop features. Entry fields have no hot-key access, though you can use the arrow keys and the mouse to navigate. Fortunately, context-sensitive help is displayed in the bottom half of the window, and F1 brings up the familiar IPF-based help facility.

CompDeux uses the Print To field to write to either a printer or a file, including HTML output. File names can use standard wildcards or a few special wildcards, and you can select the files that meet your criteria from a text window. In practice, this is a fast way to run through a series of files (such as *.txt or *.bak files).

Sister utilities

CompDeux is most useful to me, but the company has a few other utilities of interest.

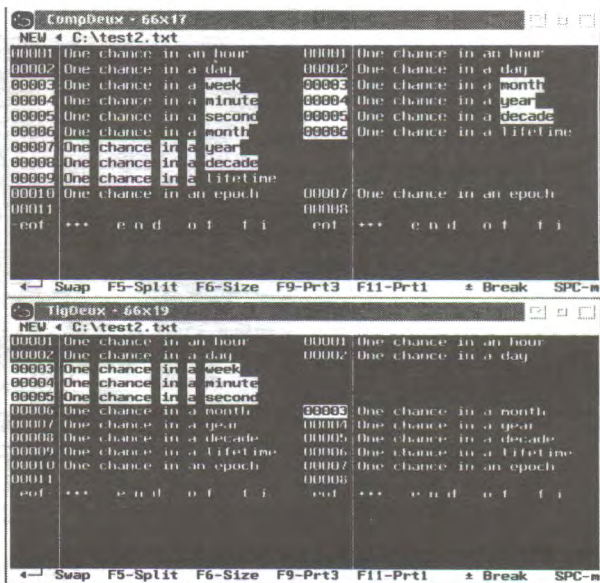
TigDeux is similar to CompDeux, but uses a different method of comparing files. If two files have highly repetitive data, the matching algorithm in TigDeux may work better. The screen shot shows how the two programs see two lists with a lot of similar-looking lines. However, CompDeux has an option for "Deep Search" which will often produce the same results as TigDeux.

CompDeux 2.03

\$45

<http://world.std.com/~jdveale/index.html>

Also available: TigDeux + CompDeux (\$50), SibDeux + CompDeux (\$55), TFuzDeux + CompDeux (\$55), or all four for \$70



TFuzDeux specializes in comparing tables of numbers. It allows you to specify acceptable ranges of variation for given columns. For instance, if you compare two files with running totals, you can tell TFuzDeux not to highlight numbers that have changed by less than a given percentage or fixed value.

The other programs seem to be aimed primarily at developers but may be useful for other types of analysis. SibDeux is aimed squarely at programmers, based on an interesting concept. It lets you compare two versions of one code file and "bounce" changes to another variant of the code—say, source for a demo version or a custom client version of a program.

Powerful tools

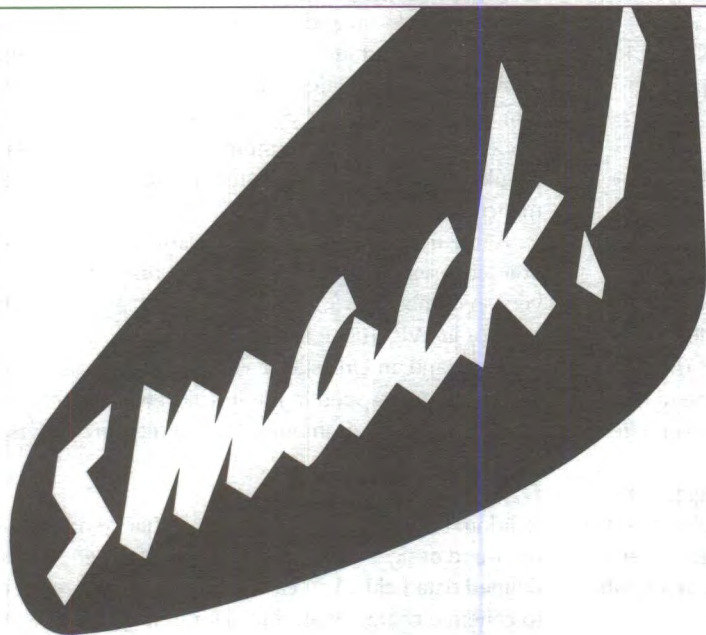
These utilities are a powerful set of tools for those who need to compare text files. While the interface may be uncomfortable for those who are used to CUA-compliant or object-oriented interfaces, for most needs, CompDeux in its default setup will probably do the job fine. Those willing to persevere a bit will be able to gain even more.

Trial versions are available on the author's Web site. The trial is time-limited and will not allow you to scroll horizontally (if you try, you will not be able to scroll vertically).

Upon purchasing the software, make backups of the original media you are sent. The registration code is coded within the executable(s), so if you lose the program, you will need to contact the author for

replacements. If you expect to need to do customization, keep the printed manual handy, as it is more complete than the online help system. ☺

Samuel Little has worked for Gale Group or its predecessors since 1982, mostly as a programmer of proprietary databases on IBM big iron until the company opted for PC-based solutions. He started using OS/2 in 1993, after rushing out to purchase version 2.1 just after it was released, then waiting three months for a working driver for his SCSI card.



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The labeling program for OS/2

New and improved

compiled by Esther Schindler

Although I've been writing about OS/2 applications for a very long time, a few delights never quite wear off. One of them is the international flavor of the OS/2 development community. While applications and utilities for other operating systems remain largely US-based (with a few notable exceptions, which themselves are usually marketed by US companies), the OS/2 marketplace has always had applications marketed by developers based in Germany, or Russia, or just about anyplace on the planet. Take a look at the origins of the authors providing the software applications and updates this month, for example. It's a lovely reminder of the benefits of our connected community.

RexxAutoStart

RexxAutoStart 1.60 is a workaround for timing problems that lead to a Workplace Shell startup hang on certain OS/2 versions and fix levels. The utility also gives you a limited possibility to control the order of automatically started programs upon bootup, and lets you choose any folder to be your startup folder.

RexxAutoStart is free software under the GNU Public License, and its source code is included.

This version removed the requirement for Object Rexx and/or RxExtras, added support for OS/2 Warp Server for e-Business, and no longer generates a REXX script for each execution.

RexxAutoStart Version 1.60 is at <http://hobbes.nmsu.edu/pub/os2/uti1/wps/rxast160.zip>.

Postgres SQL

If you want a cross-platform SQL database, you don't have to spend a truckload of money. If your needs don't include the word "enterprise" and you think "scalable" means "we might need to hire a couple of extra people one of these days," you might be satisfied with one of the several free-to-inexpensive SQL databases out there.

Among them is Postgres SQL, and the Postgres SQL Server version 7.0 RC5 is now available on Hobbes and at <http://venuto.monrif.net>. This "multiuser edition" version is said to be optimized for Pentium code, and more stable than previous versions.

Xact

Xact is an application which presents different types of data in graphic form. An integrated vector graphics editor allows you to add objects and captions for illustrations and descriptive text. Xact works in an object-oriented manner: the charts themselves are made up of vector graphics

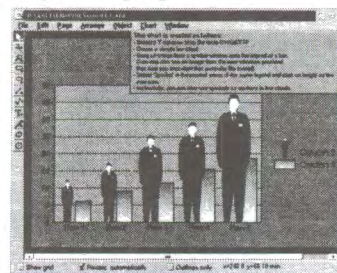
objects, and settings are entered in the context menus.

Version 7 of Xact and XactPro were just released with English language support and manual. It's been a long time coming—the last English version released was 3.2.

XactPro has chart-type "Change Object Styles," the ability to list object names, an import filter for shape files so you can import maps, and it supports CMYK colors.

Pricing for Xact 7.0 begins at \$499, XactPro is \$799.

More information is available from www.sci1ab.de, including an English-language demo.



UniMaint update

UniMaint backs up and repairs the Workplace Shell and various INI files. It includes an Uninstaller to help remove applications and utilities you no longer need. If your system seems sluggish and you do not use a cleanser of the OS/2 INI files, running a systems cleanser like UniMaint should help improve your system reliability and performance.

A free update to UniMaint available from www.file-star.com/pages/download.html, and it brings the utility's version number to v5.10.15. Most notable in this update is a fix for its WPS repair features when Deskman/2 is installed, and an Uninstaller situation that caused a couple of users to get trapped in the function with no exit path. The developer recommends it for all registered users.

Randomizer

Randomizer is a lightweight database back-end with a front-end designed to quickly pull random items from user-defined data fields. You can imagine Randomizer as a way to generate character attributes for a story you're writing, having fields for hair color, eye color, height, weight, disposition, and so forth, and getting one or more random selections from each field.

Randomizer v3 is available from www.tstonramp.com/~freiheit/files/Randomizer3.zip. Version 3.0 lets you specify the names of your data files, changed file formats, extends data field functionality.

Randomizer is freeware with open source. Feel free to modify the source code for your own needs, but the author would like to know how it's being used and what changes are being made to it.

Zeryx Vispro REXX add-on

Eric Lavoie (elavoie@zeryx.com) made available a free object add-on for Vispro REXX and C++, which provides a "proper" progress bar API. The features include 3D effects, and progress displays as percentages or numbers. You can download it from www.zeryx.com.

Mesa 2 Spreadsheet

Version 2.3 of Sundial Systems' Mesa 2 spreadsheet adds more features, more functions, and greater versatility to the product that 32BitsOnline called "the leading contender... to be the top OS/2 software of the year."

This version of Mesa 2 features tremendous enhancements to Mesa 2's real-time feed capabilities, plus a host of new features. It adds:

- Historical real-time feed
- New formula functions for payments, text substitution, matrix handling, and real-time feed control
- New scripting functions for data entry and real-time feed control
- File locking
- Quatro Pro WB2 import

- Excel 5, 95 and extended 97 export
 - Improved script console
 - More customizable menus
 - New SmartFreeze title locking options
- You can learn more at www.sundialsystems.com/mesa. You'll also find information about an extra special upgrade offer that includes a copy of Bill Schindler's new book, *Down to Earth REXX*.

Network Trace for OS/2

Golden Code Development Corp. has released version 1.1 of Network Trace for OS/2, a network packet capture software for OS/2 and Workspace On-Demand environments. Network Trace addresses the needs of network administrators maintaining sites with very high network traffic conditions.

Several enhancements have been made to improve the product's usability, versatility, and performance. Among them are:

- Service Mode. This mode of operation was added to address the needs of clients with heavy traffic network segments and integrated Network Trace installations on Ethernet. Service Mode allows much higher performance than the product's original design, now termed "Protocol" Mode. The result, says the company, is the virtual elimination of frame loss, even during very high network utilization. In addition, this architecture allows Ethernet frames outbound

from a tracing machine to be captured, removing a critical limitation of the original design.

- Additional tested hardware. The new IBM 16/4 Token-Ring CardBus Adapter has been added to the list of tested network hardware. Network Trace for OS/2 can now be used to take promiscuous traces of Token-Ring networks from a notebook computer.
- Improved diagnostic tools. The product's suite of diagnostic utilities has been expanded and improved to offer better assistance in planning, configuration, and troubleshooting.
- Full support for IBM LAN Systems NDIS extensions.
- Enhanced message handling and expanded documentation.

Additional information is available at www.goldencode.com.

ISwitcher

ISwitcher is a free replacement for the OS/2 Alt-Tab task switcher. It works in both Presentation Manager and full screen sessions. The program can also be used with the Ctrl-Tab hot key combination.

ISwitcher 2.5 English has been uploaded to Hobbes. You can find it at <http://hobbes.nmsu.edu/pub/os2/util/wps/1sw250en.zip>.

RxWav: REXX audio library

RxWav is a freeware and open source REXX



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library, with REXX command examples that add useful functions for editing audio files. This version adds Mus2wav, and a simple synthesizer using RxWav. You can find it at <http://katob1eto.dyndns.org/rxwav.html>.

NetDrive

Blueprint Software Works, Inc. released the second beta of its NetDrive for OS/2. NetDrive is a virtual file system which allows you to create a virtual volume from an FTP site, a local directory, or a network resource.

NetDrive for OS/2 Beta 2 is available from <ftp://ftp.bmtmicro.com/bmtmicro/netdrive/ndfsb2.zip>.

DHFilter

Have you ever received an email message with information worth saving, but found that the text has been mangled by multiple forwards and strange text wraps? Sure, you could load the message into your favorite editor and clean it up manually. But you might want to check out a new set of filter utilities from Don Hawkinson, which claim to fix such problems.

Filters are system utilities that intercept data from the standard input device (STDIN), process it, and send it to the standard output device (STDOUT). Filters can be used with a pipe.

XFWRD is a simple filter that removes all ">" characters at the start of a line. It only removes the ">" characters at the start of a line and stops when any other character is found.

XFORM filters the new line characters from lines that are more than one character long. Thus it will turn each paragraph into one long line suitable for importing into a program that provides word wrapping.

XNEWS attempts to remove MIME formatting characters, "smart quotes" and the other "smart" formatting characters beyond the normal keyboard character set. These programs work with Hawkinson's Command Line Clipboard Access (CCA) utilities,

which provide access to the OS/2 clipboard.

You can find out more about CCA at www2.southwind.net/~dwhawk/clipboard.html. A trial version is available.

SmartBar 3.0

SmartBar 3.0 monitors various system activities, from simple functions, like displaying the time or the number of running processes, to advanced features, such as support for power management or email. You can customize SmartBar's look and feel. This utility appears to be free; there's no indication of registration or cost on the author's Web site.

More information, including screen shots, is available from www.crosswinds.net/~os2athome/SmartBar/indexe.html or from the author's homepage at <http://AlessandroRossi.freeweb.org>.

Down to Earth REXX

Okay, so maybe this is a plug that's a bit close to home—the book is written by the editor of *extended attributes*—but the subject is certain to be close to your hearts.

After *Teach Yourself REXX in 21 Days* went out of print, Bill Schindler began to be inundated with email messages from people who wanted to know where they could buy a copy of the book. Finally, after several years, Bill listened. *Down To Earth REXX* is an updated version of the previous book, published by Perfect Niche Software. Written for the inexperienced programmer, *Down To Earth REXX* introduces the reader to programming using the REXX language that's built into OS/2. It teaches how to understand and use the language's features, from stem variables to powerful text parsing, and it includes a chapter explaining how to extend the use of the OS/2 Enhanced Editor using REXX.

The book is available for \$29.95 from Amazon.com. It's also available direct from the publisher by writing to sales@perfect-niche.com.

OS/2 Shareware BBS

The OS/2 Shareware BBS seems to collect files that don't appear elsewhere—or at least it does a good job of telling OS/2 users what new files have arrived, which might come out to the same thing. Here's a sample of recent uploads.

The files may be obtained in several ways: You can direct dial the BBS or telnet to the BBS: <telnet://bbs.os2bbs.com> and download most of these files for free. All the files are available to subscribers directly through the Web site. See the online registration form at www.os2bbs.com/download/register.html.

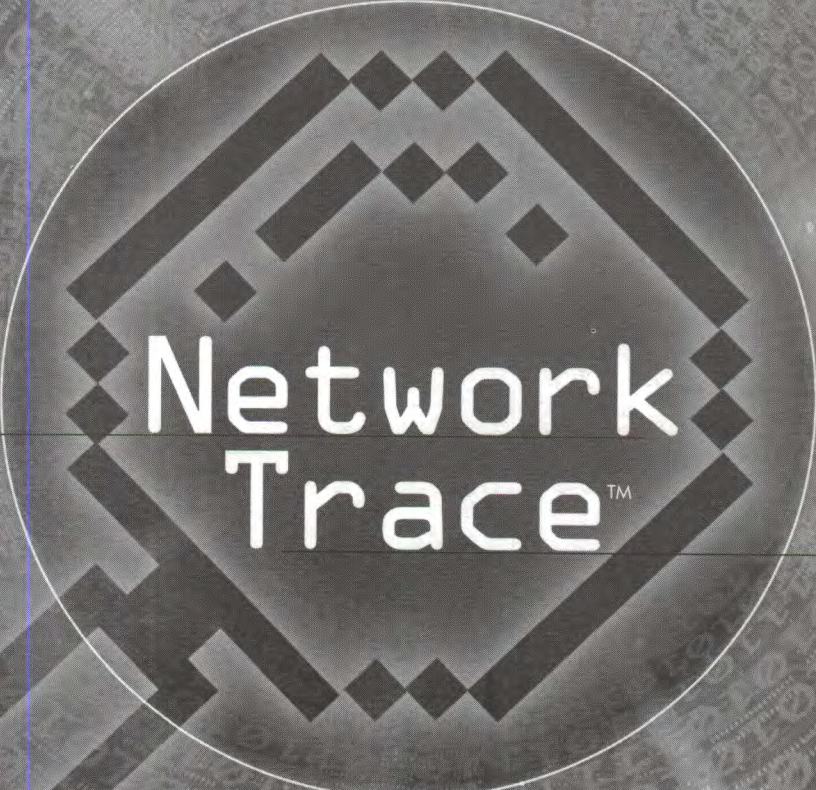
- SMW161.ZIP: Styler/2 (Smart Windows) V.1.6.1. Styler/2 enhances both the aesthetics and the functionality of the operating system. Bitmaps and documentation are included in the archive.
- SMICONS.ZIP: Sailor Moon icons for OS/2 and Win32.
- SCACHE45.ZIP: Java/Smart Cache 0.45. HTTP proxy server, anonymizer and filter. Useful for offline browsing.
- RBEMX144.ZIP: Object-Oriented scripting language ruby 1.4.4.
- PS140I.ZIP: PKTSecretary (PKTSec) is a message filter for the FidoNet message formats PKT type 2, 2+ and 2.2.
- PSIFTP97.ZIP: Psion OS/2 utilities (v0.97).
- PMPTPMP5.ZIP: Add-on for PM Patrol to show number of opened TCP/IP sockets on its status line.
- PMCSTEX.ZIP: pmCSTeX for EPM v16.4.2000: (La){em}TeX IDE/FrontEnd for EPM.
- PLM.ZIP: PL/M-80 compiler hosted on OS/2.
- PGP096.ZIP: PGPKeys for OS/2.
- PDPSIINF.ZIP: An INF file with the new PDPSI docs. V1.0. ☺

Network Trace™ for OS/2® by Golden Code Development is software designed to reduce the cost of ownership of your OS/2 network. It enables any OS/2 machine on your network to capture all network traffic to a file for later analysis. Network Trace makes it easy to gather traces, whether on your local segment, or on the most remote segment of your WAN. You can now have the benefit of a hardware network probe on each of your network segments, but with a software-only implementation. You leverage the hardware you already have, and the software is deployed easily through standard software distribution.


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